

Blu-ray Review: Howlingly Derivative 'Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days'

Submitted by [mattmoviemann](#) [1] on January 8, 2013 - 10:46am

- [Blu-ray Review](#) [2]
- [David Bowers](#) [3]
- [Diary of a Wimpy Kid](#) [4]
- [Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days](#) [5]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [6]
- [Jeff Kinney](#) [7]
- [Matt Fagerholm](#) [8]
- [Steve Zahn](#) [9]
- [Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment](#) [10]
- [Zachary Gordon](#) [11]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [12]

CHICAGO – Most former kids can agree that junior high is pure hell. It's the dividing line between the carefree bliss of elementary school and the budding maturity of high school. Suddenly kids are faced with a decision: either assert their dominance over the weakest of their peers or risk joining them. Become a bully or be bullied. Neither option is enticing.

Jeff Kinney's "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" book series connected with young readers who related to its awkward protagonist, Greg Heffley, whose misadventures were conveyed through a cheerful amalgamation of journal entries, illustrations and comics. The film adaptations, however, have been more interested in capturing Kinney's broadly comic sensibility rather than his nuggets of truth. Instead of illuminating the humanity within Kinney's caricatures, the films exploit their quirks in nauseatingly cynical fashion.



Blu-ray Rating: **1.5/5.0**

What laughs are there to be gleaned from a fat kid who acts like every fat sidekick ever designed to make the skinny lead appear cooler by contrast? Or the nerd with oversized glasses whose flared nostrils are more cavernous than his gaping mouth? Or the Indian kid who's funny because...well, he has an Indian accent? Hilarious! These are such offensively shallow stereotypes that they encourage bullying more than anything. They enforce the heartless categories that sensitive kids find themselves wedged within during the three-year prison sentence of junior high. The best thing that can be said about "Dog Days," the third installment in the "Wimpy Kid" movie franchise, is that it devotes the majority of its screen time elsewhere. With Greg precariously perched in the summer months between seventh and eighth grade, the script by Maya Forbes and Wallace Wolodarsky (of "Simpsons" and Wes Anderson fame) centers on the boy's uneasy relationship with his father (Steve Zahn), a Civil War reenactor enraged by his son's habit of playing video games—even on the first day of summer. Zahn's reliably watchable goofiness sporadically enlivens a plot so painfully derivative, it could've been easily recycled from any number of "Leave it to Beaver" episodes, not to mention every "Nickelodeon" program ever made.



Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days was released on Blu-ray and DVD on December 18th, 2012.

Photo credit: Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment

The highlight of the Blu-ray extras for "Dog Days" is a brief interview with Kinney, who recalls his early failure at achieving his dream of becoming a newspaper cartoonist. Perhaps it was Kinney's childhood love of comics that inspired one of the film's few charming moments, as Greg and his father bond over their shared hatred of "Li'l Cutie," an archaic "Family Circus"-style strip that somehow managed to remain in the paper long after it stopped being funny. "That's not even a joke!" Greg groans after reading the comic's latest non-punchline, yet the irony here is that the film's humor is no more inspired than "Li'l Cutie." Consider the very first set-piece where Greg visits a public pool and is disgusted by the sight of naked men showering. His disgust is only heightened after he realizes that his little brother has—you guessed it—peed in the pool. That's not even a joke!

"Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days" is presented in 1080p High Definition (with a 1.85:1 aspect ratio), accompanied by English, French and Spanish audio tracks and is available in a Blu-ray/DVD/Digital Copy combo pack. Special features include deleted scenes, a gag reel, a bonus animated short (clocking in under 3 minutes), and an audio commentary track with director David Bowers, whose crowning achievement remains "Flushed Away."

'Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days' is released by Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment and stars Zachary Gordon, Steve Zahn, Robert Capron, Devon Bostick, Rachael Harris, Peyton List, Grayson Russell, Karan Brar and Laine MacNeil. It was written by Maya Forbes and Wallace Wolodarsky and directed by David Bowers. It was released on December 18th, 2012. It is rated PG.



[13]

By [MATT FAGERHOLM](#) [14]
Staff Writer
HollywoodChicago.com
matt@hollywoodchicago.com [13]

Source URL (retrieved on *Apr 24 2024 - 11:00am*):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/21002/blu-ray-review-howlingly-derivative-diary-of-a-wimpy-kid-dog-days>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/mattmovieman>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/blu-ray-review>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/david-bowers>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/diary-of-a-wimpy-kid>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/diary-of-a-wimpy-kid-dog-days>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/jeff-kinney>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/matt-fagerholm>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/steve-zahn>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/twentieth-century-fox-home-entertainment>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/zachary-gordon>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dvd-theater-tv-news>
- [13] <mailto:matt@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#MATT>